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MLK WINS THANKSGIVING DAY GAME

INTERVIEW WITH MLK HEAD FOOTBALL COACH MALIK JONES ON THE LEGACY OF THE MLK THANKSGIVING DAY GAME



By EJ Holt
Sports Correspondent
Photo Courtesy of Malik Jones

The Martin Luther King/Germantown Thanksgiving game. Defensive schemes. Workouts, Mental Health and Hamilton. What do all these things have in common? The answer is Coach Malik. He is well versed in all of these subjects. I got a chance to listen to him share his wealth of knowledge on a few things.

We're pretty close to Thanksgiving, and I will always associate football with this holiday. Locally the MLK/Germantown game was always a big deal as far as bragging rights were concerned. I asked coach if he had any memories of the Thanksgiving game.

That question took him back to 1990. He said he was in the bleachers watching his brother play. It was in this moment that the energy in the crowd and the action on the field made him fall in love with the game of football.

The conversation transi-

tioned to on the field where I asked how the season was going. Coach spoke on the contributing factors that lead to the rough season the team has had. Early in the season the team had a bout with Covid which led to players missing time. Facing some of the top football programs in the country when you're not at full strength is less than ideal, but Coach always stays upbeat and positive. "Never let them see you down".

I asked if as a coach are you married to a certain scheme or style of play. "Marriage suggests complacency" Coach said

Coach also made it clear that his preference when coaching defense is to attack. He approaches defense with an offensive mindset meaning he is constantly looking for the weakness and how to attack it. Coach is also a stickler for the details. His players must know what their keys are pre-snap, what technique they are to use and exactly what part of an offense they are attacking. Sound advice from the architect of a defense that produces 20 turnovers a season.

So how do you get your players ready to run your attacking defensive scheme?

"Every player has their own customized workout based on their individual strengths and weaknesses". Throughout the year the workouts vary from being centered on strength and endurance to focusing on speed. Coach wants to build a team of fast twitch athletes that can attack in the blink of an eye.

As passionate as Coach Malik is about football, I got the impression that he is just as passionate about mental health. Not just that of his players, but his own as well. Coach Malik is on the forefront of the movement to bring awareness and acknowledgement to the mental health of young players and students.

"Introduce them to mental health. Make them emotionally aware. Understand the relationship between mental health and what happens on the football field. Let them know they don't have to go it alone."

Football is an emotional sport. There is a certain amount of anger, energy and aggression you have to play with in order to be effective on the field. Sometimes the lines get blurred on when to turn those emotions on and off.

The coaching of football and mental health isn't just limited to the football season. Coach Malik has implemented "Wellness Tuesday's" where the goal is to present the best version of yourself on that day, your best clothes, your best attitude, your best frame of mind. An exercise that gets the players in a positive mindset that carries over throughout the week.

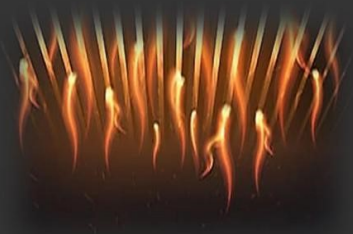
Coach also spoke on managing his own mental health and anger. "Anger is cumulative and transferrable". Meaning that if you're keeping anger bottled up inside, there is a good chance it can negatively affect the people around you. Coach focuses on having "productive anger", channelling that energy into productive action either on the field or off of it.

Coach Malik also spoke on his upbringing and how there were not a lot of options for young men of color in the early to mid 90's. Along with many of us, Coach had friends that took the path that led to incarceration or the cemetery. What changed things for Coach Malik was having the courage to create a different path. That's where Hamilton comes in.

Hamilton is a stage play and musical from 2015 that tells the life story of Alexander Hamilton. Hamilton was an immigrant that came over to America, fought alongside George Washington in the revolutionary war and created a system of credit that is still used to this very day. He's also that guy on the ten dollar bill.

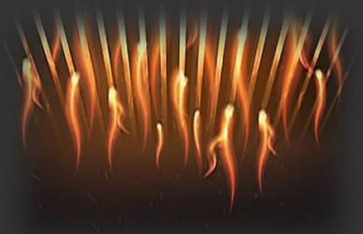
The correlation between Hamilton and what Coach Malik is talking about lies in the idea of walking your own path and not being afraid to speak up for yourself, even if everybody thinks you are wrong. People fought Hamilton every step of the way when he came up with crazy ideas like a naval fleet and abolishment of slavery. But Hamilton still persisted. That is the message Coach Malik conveyed, set the example now, never be afraid of being the first one to do something. You just might build something great enough that continues on after you.

It was a true joy in speaking with a great coach and a great man.



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THE METAVERSE IS HERE



By R. S. Broker

Ok, I been asked the question at least 20 times this week. From the Gram, to TikTok and even at Thanksgiving dinner. We know Facebook has changed their name to Meta. And if you know a little something about cryptos, you know that the Winklevoss brothers (Tyler and Cameron) recently raised \$400 million to build a metaverse.

So, what is the Metaverse? The metaverse is like set of universes. It is a virtual world that individuals can come together to socialize, on a virtual reality. Basically, it's the link between the digital and the physical forms. As The goal is to wedge the real world with the digital world. This is the

2nd innovation of the internet; some say it's the successor.

The term "metaverse" was first mentioned and created in Neal Stephenson's novel Snow Crash- termed a cyberpunk book. This was an imaginary place that could be experienced by anyone over the fiber optics network.

You can buy digital assets like digital land or build a digital horse (for example horse racing) or a beautiful park- like a Central Park in New York and combine it with Fairmount Park in Philly and make it a virtual reality. Or you can be Pacman himself, running through a maze and being chased by gghost (note- Atari does have its own token). So instead of just viewing information on a website or an application, you would be IN the digital content. This sounds so ridiculous and extreme right? But if you know like I know, from DeRace to MetaHero to the MicroPets, its already here. And you thought Fornite was awesome. Please understand

that there was a digital lot of land in the metaverse world of Decentraland sold for a record of \$2.43 Million USD. Yes, we are talking about virtual real estate, an imaginary world. And then there's DeRace, a Non-Fungible horse racing metaverse where you can have horse races, breed these horses, build your own course for theater/ performance venues- and make money while doing it. In other words, DeRace is a virtual NFT horse racing universe based on blockchain. One horse sold for

\$125,000, btw.

The world is changing so fast. I was able to understand the world of cryptocurrency and its applications very easily. But then came NFT Art and Music, which seems a lot more complicated. And now this, the metaverse, just blew my mind. Please my people, this is the future, get ready for you a new reality.

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horizon. This isn't just the USA going through a change. The whole world is... It won't be easy, but you never know until to try. Oh, and don't forget to follow me on IG or YouTube at @TheGetMoneyShow. Believe in yourself, believe in your dreams, and always remember money a'int just green. We are not financial advisors or giving out financial recommendations.

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Extra Corn Muffin-	\$0.75

WE ACCEPT



EVANS CO-SPONSORS BILL TO PROVIDE \$1 BILLION TO SOLVE SHOOTING CASES



By James Williams
Editor-in-Chief
Photo Credit: Office of
Dwight Evans

Congressman Dwight Evans (D-PA-3rd) working with Congresswoman Val Demings (D-Florida), on a bill that over 10 years will provide that would \$1 billion in funding from the federal government to help local police raise their clearance rates when it comes to shootings. Currently Philadelphia's clearance rate is

43% which has gotten worst since last year. A clearance rate is determined. By dividing the number of crimes solved by the number of crimes committed.

The legislation is supported by the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, the Major Cities Chiefs Association and the National Police Foundation.

"Helping our state and local police solve more fatal and non-fatal shooting cases

would be a huge win for public safety in Philadelphia and across the country – district attorneys can't bring cases that don't reach them, so this would help make our neighborhoods safer," Evans said.

Evans also added:

"As someone who has pushed for help for victims of gun violence, I'm also very pleased that this bill would provide victims and family members with mental health resources and assistance with shelter, wage, and relocation costs," Evans said.

The lead sponsor is Congresswoman Val Demings (D-Florida), a former Chief of the Orlando Police Department. Regarding the legislation Demings stated the following, "Simply put, many agencies lack the resources they need to bring justice to these cases and

closure for families. Half of gun murders in the United States go unsolved, and victims are often left with no justice and little support. This legislation would inject critical new funding into America's law enforcement agencies to hire and train detectives and specialists specifically committed to investigate unsolved crimes, comfort victims, and bring the guilty to justice."

Evans is a lead co-sponsor of the Violent Incident Clearance and Technological Investigative Methods (VICTIM) Act (H.R. 5768).

The goal of the bill is to establish a grant program with through the Department of Justice (DOJ), which would:

1. Hire and retain detectives to investigate homicide and non-fatal shootings.
2. Acquire resources for processing evidence, includ-

ing the hiring of additional personnel.

3. Hire personnel trained to analyze criminal intelligence and crime trends.
4. Train detectives and evidence processing personnel in effective procedures and techniques; and ensure victim services are sufficiently staffed, funded, and trained.

Based on the legislation grant would require that information is sent to the DOJ on:

1. How the money was spent
2. How it affected clearance rates for homicides and non-fatal shootings.

Based on the bill The National Institute of Justice would measure, evaluate, and report to Congress the effectiveness of the policies policies and procedures of the grantees

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GUEST COLUMN: WHEN HUMANITY IS LOST



State Rep. Darisha Parker
D-Philadelphia
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I've been deep in contemplative thought since the reporting of a SEPTA train assault. I don't even need to specify because you know the assault of which I speak.

I'm not alone in my disgust, anger, sadness or shock -- disgust over the blatant disregard for another human's well-being; the anger that such a brazen attack could happen in a public space and that it can happen without a fellow human stepping in to stop the attack;

the sadness that we are still in a world where a person carries out vicious attacks on fellow humans; and finally, the shock that in 2021 we're still having discussions about sexual violence.

There has got to be a correlation between the last 18 months and its part in violent incidents of many kind. But our ability to not see one another as the humans that we all are -- that has spiraled out of control and feels like a triggering point for so many acts of aggression, crime, and overall dismissiveness of the people with which we inhabit the planet.

How did we get here? More importantly, how do we get to a place of peaceful existence with our neighbors, family and even total strangers? Shouldn't civility be common behavior? Must it be integrated into laws or some doctrine that we all learn?

As a state representative in

the Pennsylvania legislature, I would be happy to discuss with my colleagues the legislative options that make life in our commonwealth safer and more equal for all our residents. But what do we need to say? Put your phone down and look at people as you pass them by! Wearing our masks protects us from a deadly virus but we can speak volumes with our eyes. Look at folks and nod in acknowledgement. It makes my day when someone does that to me! Stop the hurtful rhetoric on social media. Get up from your computer or put your phone down and take a walk outside to get some air and see a neighbor!

Some of these basic courtesies have become a thing of the past. I fear they may be gone forever, and only to the detriment of society. Part of the pandemic that has contributed to some of these digressions may be that we are relegated to our homes and oftentimes are in

our own echo chamber. Even with social media, where there can be feedback -- good and bad -- we are ultimately in our solitary space only to be alone with our own thoughts.

Intolerance breeds there and unacceptable behaviors can grow out of that one track conversation of the mind.

Hatred becomes normal conversation. Children emulate our behaviors. Folks gravitate to others who think like them.

But that doesn't make the world exist in its truest potential. That only proves to make the world more hateful and less peaceful.

While we are in this moment in time, take a minute to look across totality of the human race and find the humanity in it. Reach across lines of race, religion, politics and open your mind to possibilities.

Recognize that our basic

human rights are everyone's rights. We all have a place in this world -- with the right to be safe, to be accepted, to be treated with dignity -- to be treated equally.

We all have the right to opportunities of equal justice under the law and equal quality of life in our communities.

When we lose sight of another person's humanity, then we have no respect for their humanity. Masks are allowing everyone to be faceless but as humans we can make the distinction. We are not though. We're hiding behind our masks, our politics and our keyboards.

Move beyond it and come back around to humanity.

Darisha Parker is the state representative for the 198th Legislative District in Philadelphia.



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GROCERY OUTLET ON GERMANTOWN AVENUE IS BLACK OWNED & OPERATED

Mt. Airy is buzzing about the newest edition to Germantown Ave, Mount Airy Grocery Outlet. While I was hosting a Trunk or Treat at Germantown Church of the Brethren, I got the word that's there is a Black-Owned Grocery store in the area. I immediately stopped to check out all the excitement coming from down the street. I had the opportunity to meet the owners, Aaron and Chyrese Hollingsworth, as they hosted a customer appreciation day filled with free soul food provided by Southern Flames, Cake, and lots of giveaways. People stopped by to do their grocery shopping and left with a full tummy. I spoke to a few customers who were excited to shop in the area to do their grocery shopping.

Mount Airy Grocery Outlet is located at 25 West Hottter Street, Mount Airy, Philadelphia, PA 19119. Grocery Outlet is found immediately near the intersection of Quincy Street and West Hottter Street, in Mount Airy, Philadelphia. Locally owned and operated full-service supermarket serving the community with fresh, healthy food that's affordable. If you are driving, no

worries, there is a parking lot beneath the store, which many people don't realize. Bill Anderson stopped by to do a piece for the Buying Black Segment on Fox 29 and admitted that he didn't know about it.

Aaron Hollingsworth is the Owner-Operator of the MT. Airy, PA. Grocery Outlet, an extreme-value grocery retailer, offers big savings on brand-name products every day. The 15,000 square foot store offers a wide selection of fresh produce, fresh meat, deli, dairy, packaged groceries, frozen, health and beauty care, and general merchandise products.

Mr. Hollingsworth has 26 years of experience in the wholesale, convenience store, and value channel retail sectors. He has been a leader in strategic planning, product development, negotiating, inventory, and category management.

Mr. Hollinsworth holds a bachelor's in Business Administration with a concentration in Accounting from Stillman College and is joined by his wife, Chyrese Hollingsworth. She is a nurse practitioner with VA

hospital in Philadelphia. They are proud to serve the Mount Airy, PA community with a store that reflects community pride, WOW savings, and friendly customer service.

Shelly Shell: Tell us about how you got started with the supermarket business?

Grocery Outlet: After obtaining a BA in Business and Accounting, I started my career with Bruno's in Store Operations as a Manager.

Shelly Shell: How involved are you in the day-to-day operations?

Grocery Outlet: We are here every day and involved in hiring, training, merchandising, and office management.

Shelly Shell: You are located on Germantown Ave. in Philadelphia; how did you decide to bring the Grocery Outlet to the Uptown area?

Grocery Outlet: The location was selected by Grocery Outlet, but we had a choice of several locations. When we visited the Mt Airy community, we fell in love with the area right

away. It reminded us of the community where we grew up. We connected with the entrepreneur and hard-working spirit of the community.

Shelly Shell: What makes Grocery Outlet unique from other supermarkets?

Grocery Outlet: Name Brand goods at amazing prices along with NOSH selection which stands for Natural, Organic, Specialty, & Healthy.

Shelly Shell: You recently did a Turkey giveaway; what are some of the ways you reach out into the community?

Grocery Outlet: We donate to the Philly Food Rescue and Philabundance Food Banks. We raised over \$4k in food donations during our Independence From Hunger campaign and donated to other small businesses in the community.

Shelly Shell: How do you alert the customers about your weekly sale items?

Grocery Outlet: While we pride ourselves on having amazing deals every day,

we also send sale updates through email. You can see our Ad specials at grocery-outlet.com.

Shelly Shell: Do you plan on opening other locations?

Grocery Outlet: Our focus is to continue building the Mt. Airy location to its maximum potential.

Shelly Shell: What are your Grocery Outlet Shopping Tips?

Grocery Outlet: Shop us first and often and stock up on the items you love.

Shelly Shell: How can they connect with Grocery Outlet?

Grocery Outlet: Connect with Mount Airy Grocery Outlet on social media @groceryoutletmtairy and Facebook @mountairygroceryoutlet

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MUMMERS PARADE WILL BE BACK ON BROAD STREET NEW YEAR'S DAY



By Tom MacDonald,
WHYY

After a pandemic hiatus, mummertime will once again strut down Broad Street on New Year's Day, with promises of putting on a family-friendly parade that will avoid the racism exhibited by some members during previous events.

The 2021 parade was cancelled to avoid the spread of COVID-19, though hundreds of mummertime still marched through South Philly in what they called a

"protest" parade. Before that in 2020, some Mummertime who wore blackface prompted Mayor Jim Kenney to threaten ending the parade entirely without immediate changes.

"We've been working really hard with the Human Relations (Commission)," said City Councilmember Mark Squilla, who is also a mummertime. "We met with them and each member is doing some training and the mummertime are taking it very seriously." Organizers want to make sure no one is offended, es-

pecially by the comics, who perform skits spoofing the news of the past year.

"They understand that this is a big picture to make sure that we stand for everybody," Squilla said. "We can't say one division does this or another division does that. So, I think we as members got to stand together and do the right thing and I think training is part of that."

"The origin of the Mummertime Parade has its roots in some of Philadelphia's immigrant communities," said

Jessica Mazzone with the city's Parks and Recreation Department. "Our members are committed to showcasing performances that are family friendly and welcoming to all who attend."

Parks Commissioner Kathryn Ott Lovell said the parade draws tens of thousands of people to the city each year. She encouraged visitors to book hotel rooms now, and to head to the Independence Visitors Center in Old City to buy tickets to sit in the grandstands. As usual, the event will also be broadcast on WPHL-TV 17 in Philadelphia.

"The musicianship and spectacular costumes and that Philly brand of pageantry all come together to deliver something unique to spectators each year," she said.

The 2022 parade will follow a route from City Hall to Washington Avenue, and begin with performances by the fancy division, followed by the wenches, comic string bands, and fancy brigades. The parade will begin at 9 a.m. on New Year's morning at City Hall

and North 15th and Market streets. It will continue past several performance checkpoints along Broad Street, and will conclude at Broad and Washington Avenue.

Sam Regalbuto, president of the Mummertime String Band Association, said organizers are asking people to be careful if they elect to go out to watch the parade in person.

"We have been working diligently to organize and prepare for this year's parade and to ensure that it runs according to plan," Regalbuto said. "We want all the spectators to be able to enjoy this year's parade. We are asking all attendees and parade participants to please follow city and CDC guidelines regarding mask requirements." A new parade for Philadelphia to celebrate the holidays

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'DO RIGHT BY OUR CHILDREN OR FIND NEW JOBS': EDUCATION ADVOCATES CALL FOR FAIR SCHOOL FUNDING



Education advocates rally for fair education funding on the Pennsylvania Capitol steps on Wednesday, Nov. 17, 2021. (Capital-Star photo by Marley Parish)

BY: Marley Parish,
Pennsylvania Capital-Star

Under a clear fall sky, education advocates gathered on the Capitol steps Wednesday to deliver a message to Pennsylvania lawmakers: It's raining in public schools. "For school districts all across the state of Pennsylvania, it's not already raining — it's a doggone hurricane," the Rev. Dwayne Royster, the executive director of POWER Interfaith, a grassroots organization of state congregations, told more than 100 demonstrators holding handmade signs.

He added: "We've come to speak truth to those that are in authority today; either do right by our children or find new jobs."

Blocks away, in Commonwealth Court, Tara Yurichek, a fifth-grade history teacher at the Panther Valley School District, testified in the school funding trial, which could change how the commonwealth pays for K-12 education. When asked by an attorney for the plaintiffs in the case if she has the resources to reach every student who passes through her classroom, Yurichek answered: "No."

Panther Valley School District, which serves families in Schuylkill and Carbon counties, is one of six petitioner school districts that have sued state officials and executive branch departments to challenge how the General Assembly allocates money to the state's 500 school districts.

The case, initially dismissed by the Commonwealth Court in 2015 and revived by the state Supreme Court in 2017, pits the schools, a group of parents, the state conference of the NAACP, and the Pennsylvania Association of Rural and Small Schools, against Gov. Tom Wolf, Senate President Pro Tempore Jake Corman, R-Centre, House Speaker Bryan Cutler, R-Lancaster, the Department of Education, Education Secretary Noe Ortega, and the State Board of Education.

The plaintiffs, represented by the Education Law Center, the Public Interest Law Center, and the Los Angeles-based private law firm O'Melveny & Myers, claim the Legislature maintains an inequitable school funding system by using population data from the early 1990s to allocate education funds. They don't ask for a specific dollar amount in their lawsuit; however, they've requested the court

rule that the General Assembly enact a new way to pay for public education. Although Pennsylvania adopted a fair funding formula for appropriations in 2016, it only applies to new education funding. The petitioners argue for an increase in overall state education funds, saying that fair distribution is necessary for lawmakers to uphold the education clause in the state constitution, which charges lawmakers with providing a "thorough and efficient system." The petitioners argue that current allocation practices, which they describe as "inadequate and irrationally distributed," violate the state constitution.

Yurichek, also a mother of

two Panther Valley students, grew up in the district, and while she testified that she cares about her students, a lack of resources has left her struggling to address every child's needs. Using outdated textbooks in a classroom with 34 students, she can't reach them all.

As she sat in court Wednesday, Yurichek said her colleagues were left to cover her instruction, leaving them without scheduled time to prepare lesson plans, respond to parent questions, and schedule meetings — a cycle exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. "It has its challenges," she said of her experience teaching in the district, adding that "there's so much more I want to do for the kids, and I just can't." Though he's a defendant in the case and has praised previous education investments made by the General Assembly, Wolf agrees that funding disparities affect student success, and he's called on the Legislature to run all education funds through the modernized formula.

Last week, attorneys for Cutler and Corman said that the legislative branch exceeds its constitutional mandate by investing more in education each year. But the grassroots organizers who rallied on the Capitol steps said lawmakers have not done enough and issued a charge to legislative leaders to run all education funds through the fair funding model to ensure equitable funding for every student.

"The next time we come to these steps, we will knock on your door," Jennifer Mattson, a reverend and Lancaster County parent, said. "And we will not stop until the only thing that you have left to do to silence us is to arrest us." Mattson added: "And if that continues to fail to get your attention for you to do the right thing, then we'll do the one thing we know that will get your attention — we will vote you out."



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CANCELING DEVELOPMENT IS CANCELING OPPORTUNITY

It's been proven time and time again that "Cancel Culture" is everywhere and it can happen to anyone. In Philadelphia, it also happens to ideas. Wireless Philadelphia anyone? But, Philly is a tough town and it's really hard to cancel anything for long here. Even poverty.

In 2018, Philadelphia was dubbed the "...poorest big city in the country" and anyone willing to do a quick Google search can find countless articles and studies tagging our great city with poverty and crime. If you are 35 or older you should remember how neighborhoods like "Da Bottom", Richard Allen Projects, and Francisville were notorious for weekly shootings, robberies, and other violent acts. But that's all been rehabilitated because of property development.

Now, as it typhoons through Northwest Philly neighborhoods: Germantown, Nicetown, and East Mt. Airy, there's a culture of cancellation brewing loud and strong. In September, Council President Clarke introduced a bill that aims to

give Councilmembers control over who sits on the Zoning Board of Adjustment. A month later, Councilmember Bass introduced legislation exploring the possibility of financial assistance to Registered Community Organizations who seek to appeal unfavorable zoning decisions to the Municipal Courts.

So there is a possible future that sees development and change canceled. But while community groups, activists, and elected officials take up positions against property developers, where does that leave undeveloped neighborhoods in the Poorest Big City in America? If property development instigated economic growth in other parts of the city, would communities in Germantown, Nicetown, and East Mt. Airy continue to experience crime and economic distress?

In 2018, the Philadelphia Planning Commission unveiled "Philadelphia 2035" - a comprehensive plan proposing zoning recommendations meant to guide "public and private investment in the physical development of our city". For Uptown

Philly, the plan offers a detailed strategy to preserve our strongest commercial districts, stabilize and strengthen our weakest business corridors, correct disorganized zoning areas, and preserve historic and public property. Because of this strategy, new eateries, new transportation investments, and even welcoming murals have sprouted along Germantown Avenue from Mt. Airy to Wayne Junction.

But, what if Cancel Culture has its way? As a zoning professional of 10 years, I've witnessed many opportunities communities have missed because they either did not see the connection development has to crime and poverty or they just did not care. By doing a bit of research, one could connect the opposition to development with the economic level of the community opposing it. Plainly, the poorer the community is, the stronger the opposition is to development. All in all, more affluent neighbors seem to see development as an opportunity rather than a big, scary monster.

I believe that change will eventually touch every section of our city. Property developers are not always our enemy and canceling it only throws away opportunity. Many of them are willing to invest in the neighborhood their project will sit because it just makes sense. This kind of change is a good thing and we must learn to collectively bargain with developers rather than miss the opportunity to strengthen our underprivileged communities.

Without development poorer neighborhoods are forced to continue collectively begging elected officials for funds that just aren't available.

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'YOU ARE GOING TO SEE A RENAISSANCE': NEW COALITION RISES TO BROKER A CEASEFIRE IN PHILLY



Queen Mother Falah Fattah speaks at the "Return To Peace in the Streets" press conference at the House of Umoja, located at 5625 Master Street in Philadelphia. (Tennyson Donyéa/WHYY)

By Tennyson Donyéa,
WHYY

It's been nearly 50 years since the original Imani Peace Pact helped transform Philadelphia neighborhoods. The truce, brokered in 1974 by the community organization and youth shelter, House of Umoja, effectively created a ceasefire agreement between 30 street gangs in the city. Gun violence dropped dramatically over the next few years.

With Philadelphia on pace to have more than 500 people murdered in 2021, Queen Mother Falaka Fattah, who is named after continental African tradition, said it's time for a new treaty.

On Sunday, nearly a dozen community members gathered outside the House of Umoja, located at 5625 West Master Street, as Fattah once again called for a ceasefire. Some former gang members who were at the original meeting attended once again. Attendees wore green ribbons to symbolize "youth" and "the land."

"We are coming to a critical mass, where you hear from ... different layers of the community, that they're hurting, they're in pain, and they want this to stop," Fattah said on her recent decision to reignite the original crusade she launched with her late husband, David Fattah. Local leaders and community organizers in collaboration with the House of Umoja have created Partners in Peace, a self-described coalition for "peace and Black life." It is a partnership between the House of Umoja and Philly Peace Park.

The coalition revealed a multi-tiered plan to broker peace in warring communities by going door-to-door and having conversations with residents in neighborhoods prone to violence. The first series of conversations begins this week, ahead of the Thanksgiving holiday. Starting at noon on Monday, the group will meet every day to initiate dialogue between community members about solutions to rising crime. It's known as

the "10-10-10 Plan," in which 10 teams of 10 people will initiate ceasefire agreements on 10 different blocks in gun violence hot spots in North and West Philly. Carroll Park will be the campaign's starting point.

"In order for the violence to stop, for the violence to cease, it's not going to come from more money being spread around, it's not going to come from more police being deployed. It's not going to come from more punishment," said Tommy Joshua Caison, a faith-based organizer from North Philadelphia. "It's going to come from God, the master, working on our hearts."

Caison is a member of Partners in Peace, and will help mediate the conversations. He has denoted North Philadelphia and West Philadelphia as "Gun Violence Ceasefire Zones."

A second series of ceasefire proposals would begin around the Winter holiday season in December.

"We are going to end the

violence in our own communities by our own Black hands. You are going to see a renaissance," Caison said. "You are going to see the most mighty renaissance that we've ever seen in the history of our people and the history of Philadelphia, once we establish peace. The new reality for Philadelphia, starting here this day, is a reality of peace."

Fattah, now 89 years old, said much of House of Umoja's work is spearheaded by her grandson, Anthony Bannister-Fattah, and she expressed hope for a new generation of peace.

"We have to take command of our own salvation and that cannot come from the top down. It has to come from the bottom up," Fattah said.

In 1974, when the first peace pact was formed, close to 450 people were murdered; by 1977, murders had dropped to 320, a decade low.

After the Fattahs learned one of their sons was a gang member, they began to take in troubled young people at their residential treatment home and anti-violence program. Over 40 years, the House of Umoja has garnered the recognition of two sitting U.S. presidents, and at one point, city probation officers began sentencing boys to spend time at the West Philly haven.

As of Nov. 20, 491 people have been murdered in Philadelphia this year, according to the Philadelphia Police Department. In 2020, there were 499 homicides in the entire year, and there were 356 reported in 2019.



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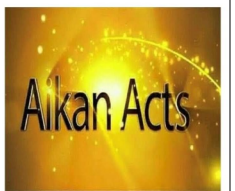
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